relating to minimum capitalization, minimum land area, etc. have also been issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. FDI in this sector would be permissible with prior Government approval.

(c) Each proposal for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is to be decided on case to case basis on the merits of the case where interests of the Indian Construction Companies in the housing sector will be duly taken care of.

New memory enhancing pills

*55. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have received proposals from bio-tech companies to launch new memory enhancing pills in India;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals with names of MNCs;

(c) whether trial tests have since been completed; and

(d) if so, the results of the tests and the names of the companies who are likely to get clearance from Government to launch these pills?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) No proposal has been received by the Drugs Controller General (India) from Biotech Companies to launch new memory enhancing pills in India.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Bids for IBP

*56. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRIMATI CHANDRAKALA PANDEY:

Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "IOC increases lead in IBP race with Rs.1100 cr. bid" and "Tata Consortium ahead of RIL in VSNL sweepstakes", which appeared in Economic Times, dated the 5th February, 2002;

(b) whether bids were therefor known before the Government's decision;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether reserve prices are also open secrets?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) Government is aware of the news item captioned "IOC emerges frontrunner for IBP, decision today" appeared in the Economic Times dated 5.2.2002.

(b) to (d) The disinvestment process is so structured that the details of the bids received, the reserve price, etc. are internal to the process and Government announces the name of the winning bidder only after it takes a final decision on the bids received. In order to maintain the integrity of the process utmost confidentiality is maintained. The same procedure was followed in the case of IBP and VSNL disinvestment and Government is not aware of any breach of its procedures. Therefore, this news item can at best be described as speculative in nature.

Revenue and fiscal deficits of NER States

*57. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) the revenue and fiscal deficits of the North-Eastern Region States from 1995-96 to 2000-2001;

(b) Government's assessment of the financial position of the North-Eastern States; and

(c) the measures adopted to restore the fiscal health of these States?

THE MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) Tables indicating revenue and fiscal surplus/ deficits of the North-Eastern States from 1995-96 to 2000-01 are given at statement (*See below*)

(b) In the recent years, the state finances of the North Eastern states have been under pressure as reflected in various fiscal indicators, such as fiscal deficit, revenue deficit, primary deficit etc. Gross fiscal deficit of the states has shown increase over the years mainly due to inadequate buoyancy in revenue (Tax/Non-Tax) receipts, and rising level of revenue expenditure.